

From the Commonwealth, of March 11.

THE LIBERATOR.

The LIBERATOR contains a letter of Horace Mann, in reply to certain charges made against him by Wendell Phillips. The disputants occupy whole columns of the paper, and the editor stands by, patting them on the back, and saying:—“Sat to,—gentlemen, only don’t kill each other, for I want you to fill my paper.”

The worthy editor has not had such a grist come to his mill in a long time. Besides, the thing is just to his taste, and that of his readers, for there is nothing your ultra-abolitionist likes so much as a good fight, provided there is no danger to life and limb.

This may seem paradoxical, since so many of them style themselves non-resistant; but your non-resistant is not by necessity a non-combatant; often quite the contrary.

We are sure that when they visit Paris, their favorite resort is the *Barrière des Combats*, especially those booths in which donkies figure and make such a dismal fight with teeth and hoofs, against asanining dogs.

We wonder that one so wise as Mr. Mann should allow himself to be drawn into a controversy which he might be sure would give infinite gratification to Mr. Phillips, delight Mr. Garrison, and afford sport for all the ultraists of the party.

We have read the controversy carefully, and the whole matter seems to us perfectly clear.

Mr. Phillips’ speech was a labored and elaborate effort to counteract the impression, which is getting to be a general belief, that the technical abolition party, however pure in motive, has been a bitter and unchristian spirit, violent and vituperative in speech, egotistical and arrogant in personal demeanor, and impudent and rash in party action.

That Mr. Phillips felt keenly the amount of truth and reason which is urging out of his belief, is perfectly obvious from the tenor of his speech. The feeling may have made him even unusually severe.

In his desperate efforts to remove or to counteract the effect of this growing belief, he hits many blows at the Free Soilers, and, among others, at Mr. Mann.

It was not to be expected that he would be fair towards Mr. Mann, and he has not been. It is perfectly manifest that he misrepresented Mr. Mann’s Congressional speech, and his mode of treating his southern interlocutor; and ascribed to him sentiments which he did not express, and motives which only a suspicious person would have surmised.

We think any candid mind must come to this conclusion.

At the same time, any candid man who knows Mr. Phillips, or knows only that he is an ultra-abolitionist, will see that he might have been quite innocent of any wrong purpose, and unconscious of any wrong-doing.

If Mr. Mann had only laughed, as he did,

and proceeded the next day to hit at somebody else, seeking one who would be likely to hit back again; for your ultra-abolitionist is, as was said of disputants of old, like certain fishes in India, that have worms in their heads, and always swim frantically against the stream.

As the self-esteem of certain sectarian bigots gets great comfort from the belief that they were specially elected of God, and makes them so desirous that all others should be damned, so the self-esteem of your ultra-abolitionist makes him a political bigot, and leads him to deny the least anti-slavery grace to any one out of his “Society.”

Now, they are not so much to blame for this as Mr. Mann supposes, for they cannot help it; it is in their very nature and organization.

Look at the types of the family—at the leaders; examine their moral occiputs, and you will see that they are impelled by a *cis a tergo*—by a power behind, and in their animal nature, which they cannot resist.

This is to be taken as a *monument of the just forbearance* of the Scribes and Pharisees! (Laughter and cheers.)

And so he goes on, raving and ranting, to the end, encouraged by the laughter and cheers of the assembly. He makes no allowance for the age in which men live, none for the social influence by which they are surrounded; none for the prejudices drawn in with their mother’s milk; none for doctrines instilled by education; none for disturbing forces of passion and self-interest. If they do not come up to this standard, he sets them down for deliberate villains.

Now, if you were to catch one of these young, and examine him, you could tell, just as you can tell by the feeling the budding horns of a kid, that he will butt his head against any granite post that stands in his way, after he has grown up to be a goat.

“What is this?” Again—“No force of argument can prevail upon an ultra-abolitionist, for, like a madman, the strength of two men in their wits is not able to hold him down.” What can be more winning than language like this?

Again—“If you were to catch one of them young, and examine him, you could tell, just as you can tell by the feeling the budding horns of a kid, that he will butt his head against any granite post that stands in his way, after he has grown up to be a goat.” What can be more winning than language like this?

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